

Oral history with 18 year old white male, Jackson County, Kentucky (Transcription)

The next excerpt is taken from original tape W 105. Begin M20 A (4)

Q: What are some other things, what about different, oh, the way people act or dress or talk, is that different now from the way it used to be? How have things changed?

R: Oh, everybody talks different. Old people still talk the same, though. All the young boys and girls, they wear their clothes different.

Q: How are they different?

R: Oh, used to be you didn't see mini-dresses or hot pants or anything, and now that's all you see.

Q: What's your, what do you think about that?

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R: It's alright!

Q: How do the old people feel like? Or even just say your father? How does he feel like?

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R: Well, he don't like it, he don't like long hair. And that's another change, young boys have, they wear long hair. Old people don't like it.

Q: What, have you tried to grow your hair long?

R: Yeah, yeah. I wanted it long, but SMIC, it don't allow you to wear long hair there. Boss over it, he makes you get it cut.

Q: Like, if you wanted to grow a moustache once?

R: He says as long as you keep it alright, and not let it get real long.

R: Do you think the young kids act different? How have people changed in other ways?

R: Oh, young kids gets out and runs around lots more now than they used to. And there's a lot, about every young boy when he gets sixteen he has his own car out and riding around.

Q: How do the kids get the money for cars?

R: Get him a job somewhere during the summer while school's out. Get him one during the winter.

Q: Do any of the girls have cars?

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R: Yes, about every girl's got a car now. Same as boys.

Q: Has that changed?

R: Yeah, it's a lot of change.

Q: How did it used to be?

R: Used to be girls didn't have no cars and you'd see boys maybe eighteen or nineteen have a car and boys sixteen or seventeen

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they wouldn't have none.

Q: What about differences, you know, when people get married, or just the ideas toward getting married? Have they changed do you think?

R: Yeah, they've changed a lot.

Q: How?

R: I couldn't tell you. I never have talked to none of them.

Q: What's your idea like? Do you want to get married?

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R: No, I don't want to get married. I'd rather stay single.

Q: Why do you think you feel that way?

R: Well, if I had a wife, I'd have to stay at home all the time. I wouldn't get out and run around. She'd be wanting me to stay there. I like to get out and run around.

Q: Where do you go? What do you do?

R: Well, I go fishing, hunting. I like to hunt and fish abnd some old boys just likes to get out and have drinks a little bit and have fun.

Q: Who are the guys you run around with?

R: See one of them's is Leo Landham, and my brother-in-law, he gets out with us sometimes, and we run around. Leo, he's been shot in the back and crippled-up and he drives his car but he's got it special-made.

Q: How did it happen?

R: He was in an apartment down there with, down in Dayton, and some woman shot him.

Q: Wow! I mean, do you know any of the details of it? So then he just came on back here?

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R: Yeah, and we, I like him very a lot, very much, and me and him's good buddies.

Q: Can he work, or how does he ...?

R: No, he has to draw disable pension, I reckon.

Q: Was he in the service, or is that how he got out?

R: No.

Q: What about you? I mean will you go in the service then?

R: Yeah. I'd like to go in the army, but since my daddy didn't want me to go, and since the war is over, I just thought I'd stay out of it.

Q: Can, is there any problem staying out of it? How do you, how do you--well, of course now they've changed the service, no draft either.

R: Uh-huh.

Q: Was your daddy in the army?

R: No, I don't think so.

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Q: What about, let's say the area down where you live, what kind of, is it, how is it, I mean is it different from some of the other areas?

R: Yes, it's very different.

Q: How is it different?

R: Up through here they, they got better houses, stuff, and and down there ...

Q: You mean down where we live?

R: Down where I live on Main Street. In the lower part there's houses run down and not fixed-up on the outside and painted like the rest up on College Avenue.

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Q: Is the area that you live in one called South Jackson?

R: No.

Q: Is it, where's that in relation to where you are?

R: No, South Jackson's on the () and we live down towards the new road.

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Q: Do you plan to stay in the county? Or how?

R: No, there's no jobs here for (). Probably have to leave. To get a job.

Q: (noise on tape--voice inaudible) What about are there girls around? Are there girls to date?

R: Yes, there's plenty of girls to date.

Q: Do you have a girlfriend?

R: Yes.

Q: What kind of person is she?

R: She's very nice, I think. She's alright!

Q: What, I mean is there, where can you go if you want to, you know, just have fun for the evening? Are there places to go?

R: Yeah.

Q: Have you heard your dad talk about, you know, early times in the county, how things were when he was growing up?

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R: Yes.

Q: What are some of the things?

R: Oh they, see this is dry county now, and used to be, it used to be wet. With whiskey and beer. And when that was he'd tell me about when the sheriffs'd get out there and shoot it out with somebody else.

Q: Does that ever happen anymore?

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R: No, you never hear of it anymore.

Q: What about some of the people around, do they, I mean how do the people sort of see themselves? Are there groups of people, like dividing themselves according to how much money people have, or what?

R: Yeah, sometimes. Some people does.

Q: Who are some of the, what are some of the different groups? Do they live in different parts of town?

R: Yeah.

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Q: Where? Where do they?

R: Well, in Jet subdivision, is over there by the side of the new road, and that's a different place.

Q: Who lives there?

R: I wouldn't know. I never go over there. And down here behind the post office, that's a nice place.

Q: Do most of the people in the county work, or are there a lot of people who can't find jobs?

R: Most of them works somewhere around here. The strip mines is about the only thing keeping () County alive. Is that they haul coal. And a lot of people gets jobs on the strip mines and driving a coal truck.

Q: What do you think will happen in the future?

R: They'll probably keep the coal companies going on account of Kentucky's one of the largest, I mean () County's one of the largest producers of coal in Kentucky.

Q: What about your sister, what kind of person is she?

R: She's kind of nice and, but we don't, I don't fool around

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with her much anymore. She, her married. She lives away from home.

R: She have children?

R: No, she young. She works all the time. Her husband works.

Q: Where does she work?

R: She works at the Corner Lodge at the Snapshot.

Q: Oh, I was over there, I mean I was over there yesterday.

R: She works in the back.

Q: And what about her husband--what's he do?

R: He's a, he lays brick, or he's helping lay brick right now. And just do jobs of carpenter work and stuff like that. He actually is a carpenter.

Q: Where did they meet each other?

R: She used to work at another restaurant down at the Teepee, and he met her down there.

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Q: Did she, where did she go to school?

R: She went to Jackson City Schools, and she went almost that one year of finishing school, she went on to Riverside. And made her finished her year and got her of high school diploma and she started to go to college and she took six hours of college and then she met her husband and they got married.

Q: Will you take the GED? Did you tell me?

R: No, I won't take it.

Q: 'Cause I didn't know if you, I was talking to Golden, and she said she had taken the, or was going to take it, I don't know. I just wondered if all the kids in the program took it? Just as individuals.

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R: Some, if you want to take it, I reckon you can, and if you don't want to, you don't have to.

Q: How'd you get in the program. I don't know very much about it.

R: I went over and put a application in and () Mr. () called me. Yeah, I'm, I mean his boy running around a lot, and his boy told me to come up and see him. I did, and he told me that they hired me.

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Q: What about some of the other people in the program. What are they like, what are their ...?

R: Well, most of them's very nice, some of them's, you call them stuck up.

R: What, what do they do?

R: They just won't speak to you.

Q; I wonder why?

R: I don't know. They think they better than you are, I reckon.

Q: Why would they think that?

R: I don't know.

Q: Do they come from families that have a lot of money or something?

R: I don't know.

Q; Are there some sort of, just to get an idea about the county, are there some families that, you know, sort of, maybe longtime families in the county that sort of have a feeling that they're better than some of the newer families? How does that work?

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R: I don't know. There is some that thinks so. They're better than us.

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Q: Are they people that have been in the county like, you know, for many generations, or they own a lot of land, or they have money, or who are the people that think that way?

R: I wouldn't know. Some of them owns a lot of land and some don't.

Q: Who are the people that own land? I mean are there people that ...?

R: <unintelligible text>, he owns a lot of land, I think. <gap> Then <unintelligible text>, he owns a lot.

Q: Is he a lawyer? Like 'cause I saw Haugue on ...

R: I don't know. Yeah, I think it is. I think he is. And that's about all I know.

Q: Interesting. What about, yesterday I noticed there were a lot of people in town in front of the bank. Are there certain times when people come in ...?

R: See there's some of them on welfare. All the old people gets their old age pension and Social Security. And they all come in to the bank and cash it. Cash their checks.

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Q: What about people on welfare, do they, is there, I mean how do other people feel about them? What do they think?

R: Well, I don't know. Now, some of them needs to be on it, and some don't.

Q: How do they get on, and how is it decided who's going to...?

R: Well, if you get divorced from your husband or something, and you've got the children, go down here to the welfare office, call it, and you can sign-up on it. END OF TAPE

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